

9th January 2026

Student Newsletter



Child Safeguarding Statement & Risk Assessment

The annual review of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement & Risk Assessment was completed by the Board of Management on Wednesday 7th January. Sincere thanks to students, parents and staff who engaged in this review process. Particular thanks to our Student Representative Council and our Parents' Association for their contributions.

The newly reviewed statement can be accessed on our website or is available to parents on request by contacting school reception.

Checklist for Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement

The Board of Management has completed the annual review of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment on 7th January 2026. The review was conducted in accordance with the Department's Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023) as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement.

Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment

St. Leo's College is a post-primary school providing post-primary education to students from First Year to Leaving Certificate Year.

In accordance with the requirements of the *Children First Act 2015*, *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017*, the *Additional to Children First (2017)*, the *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023)* and *Tiafa Guidance on the preparation of Child Safeguarding Statements*, the Board of Management of St. Leo's College has agreed the Child Safeguarding Statement set out in this document.

- The Board of Management has adopted and will implement fully and without modification the Department's *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools (revised 2023)*.
- The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is **Niamh Broderick (Principal)**
- The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is **Emma Dwyer (Deputy Principal)**
- The Relevant Person is **Niamh Broderick (Principal)**
(The relevant person is one who can provide information in respect of how the child safeguarding statement was developed and will be able to provide the statement on request. In a school setting the relevant person shall be the designated liaison person.)
- The Board of Management recognises that child protection and welfare considerations permeate all aspects of school life and must be reflected in all of the school's policies, procedures, practices and activities. In its policies, procedures, practices and activities, the school will adhere to the following principles of best practice in child protection and welfare:
The school will:
 - recognise that the protection and welfare of children is of paramount importance, regardless of all other considerations;
 - fully comply with its statutory obligations under the Children First Act 2015 and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children;
 - fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child protection and welfare matters;
 - adopt safe practices to minimise the possibility of harm or accidents happening to children and protect workers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect;

Notification regarding the Board of Management's review of the Child Safeguarding Statement

The Board of Management of St. Leo's College wishes to inform you that we completed the annual review of the school's Child Safeguarding Statement on 7th January 2026. This review was conducted in accordance with the 'Checklist for Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement' published on the gov.ie website.

Signed: *Havana Dooly*
Havana Dooly, Board of Management, 7th January 2026

Signed: *Niamh Broderick*
Niamh Broderick, Designated Liaison Person to the Board of Management, 7th January 2026

"Although no one can go back and make a brand new start, anyone can start from now and make a brand new ending."

- Carl Sandburg

Parade

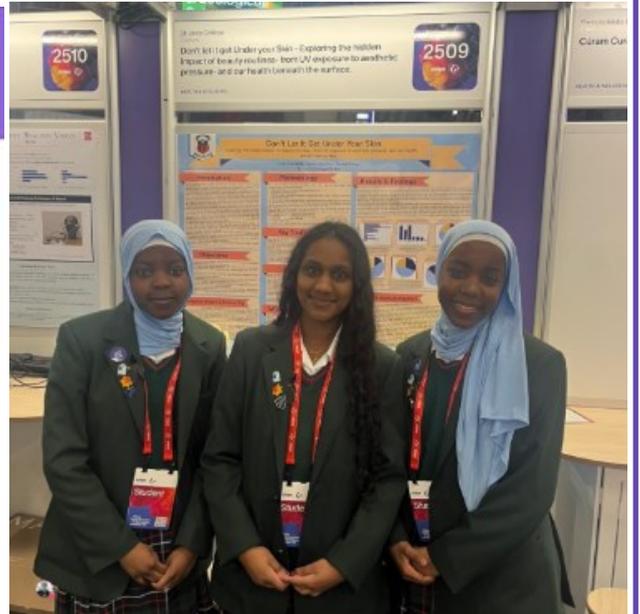
An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

Whole School Evaluation: Management, Leadership and Learning

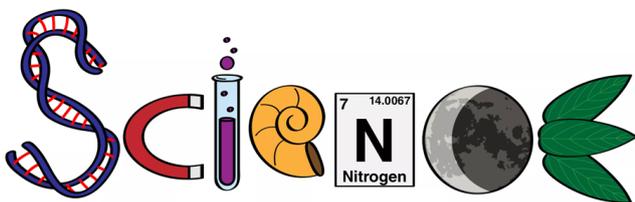
We look forward to welcoming Department of Education & Youth Inspectors to our school over the next three weeks for our upcoming WSE-MLL Inspection.

Parents of our Second & Fifth Year students are encouraged to complete the survey via the link when it is sent to you.

STRIPE YOUNG SCIENTIST & TECHNOLOGY EXHIBITION



We are incredibly proud of Naomi, Liela, Lojain and Amala who are participating in the 2026 Stripe Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition.





Very well done & best of luck to our school Bake-Off winners Alannah Seitz from Second Year and Fifth Year student Orrianna Mullins Fifth Year who are preparing to represent the school in the Carlow - Kilkenny Homecare Fundraising Bake-Off.

Huge thank you to our fantastic local businesses Home Store, Supervalu and Swan's Electrical who very generously supplied prizes. All participants will take part in next week's workshop with Sweet Baking Mama. Please have your €5 donation for Homecare Carlow-Kilkenny.

Sincere thanks to Ms. Coyne, Ms. Deegan, Ms. Hegarty and Ms. Bowe who organised this great event.

Carlow - Kilkenny Homecare Fundraiser Bake-Off





2026 St. Leo's College Calendar

please support

for Sale €10

On Sale!

Our St. Leo's College Calendar 2026 is still available to purchase from the school office for €10.

We encourage all families to buy one and support this important school fundraiser.

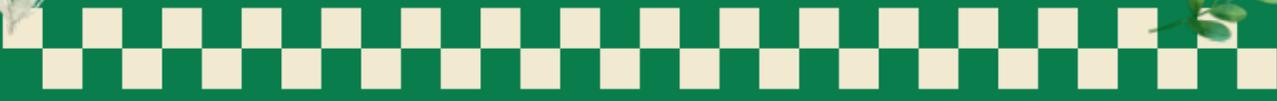
You are invited to pay for the calendar through VSware, or by card/cash at reception.

Sincere thanks to Elaine Curtis, member of our Board of Management, for her trojan work in designing this very impressive publication.

Every student featured with their Class and Year Group.



GREEN SCHOOLS



Sustainable New Year Resolution Ideas!



Buy a re-usable water bottle.



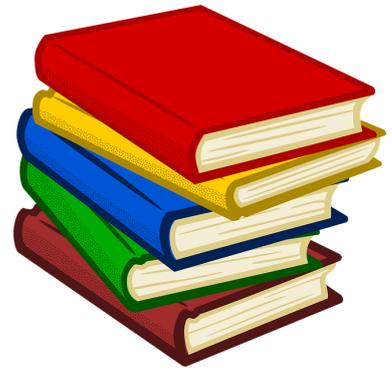
Walk, carpool, or cycle more.



Use more Organic produce.



LIBRARY



Hi everyone and happy and healthy new year to you and your family. If you've never joined book club but want to try now is the ideal time to start!

For January we will be reading 'Boy Like Me' by Simon James Green, a forbidden romance set in 1994 in the UK. I've only heard amazing things about this one and it's partly set in a library so what's not to love?!

Join us on **Wednesday 28th** at 8.30pm



Book Club



1st Year Volleyball Tournament



Best wishes to the TY students who are planning a Volleyball tournament for all of our first year students on Friday 16th January 2026 during Periods 3 and 4. We are looking forward to seeing the first years in action.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A LCA STUDENT

@ ST. LEO'S COLLEGE



IN THE LAST FEW WEEKS, WE HAVE BEEN FINISHING OUR LEISURE A RECREATION REPORT. WE ARE ALMOST DONE WITH THE REPORT AND IS FINISHING IT OFF. WE HAVE AN INTERVIEW AT THE START OF FEBRUARY ABOUT THE REPORT.

IN HAIR AND BEAUTY, WE HAVE STARTED WASHING AND BLOW DRYING OUR FRIEND'S HAIR IN THE SCHOOL SALON. IT WAS FUN. OUR KEY ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE FINISHED THIS WEEK.

ON THE 10TH OF DECEMBER WE WENT TO DUNDRUM ON ICE ICE-SKATING WITH THE TYS. WE WENT TO DUNDRUM SHOPPING CENTRE FIRST AND WENT SHOPPING AND GOT FOOD. WE ALL MET UP AT THE ICE-SKATING RINK AND PUT ON OUR ICE SKATES. WE HAD A FANTASTIC DAY OUT.

ON THE 12TH OF DECEMBER WE WENT WITH THE FIRST YEARS TO THE CINEMA, WE WATCHED THE NEW WICKED FOR GOOD. IT WAS REALLY GOOD.

Written by Leah Corrigan and Scarlett Lynskey LCA

Featured in The Nationalist



Cynthia Ni Mhurchú MEP with Nuns Sr Mary Slavin, Sr Kathleen Kennedy, Sr Mary O'Toole, Sr Maureen Enagh and Sr Bernadette O'Rourke
Photo: Michael O'Rourke Photography



Head girl Brooke Rea welcomes guests to the lecture

Cynthia returns to alma mater to deliver lecture in St Leo's

SAINT Leo's College welcomed back former student Cynthia Ni Mhurchú for an inspiring address in the annual Catherine McAuley lecture.

Now an MEP for Ireland South, Cynthia has led a diverse and accomplished career.

She spoke warmly and candidly about her path from St Leo's College to the vast corridors of the European Parliament.

She began the lecture by reflecting on her remarkable professional journey. Originally trained as a primary school teacher, she soon moved into journalism and broadcasting, becoming a well-known presenter. She recalled with fondness and pride her role as co-host of

the Eurovision Song Contest, the now legendary night that introduced her to the world and showcased Irish culture on the global stage. She then built a respected 25-year career as a barrister, specialising in family law before entering public life and politics. In a particularly moving moment, Cynthia spoke about the personal challenges she faced during her school years. Her father passed away while she was preparing for her leaving certificate, a loss that shaped her early adulthood. She also shared aspects of her mother's wisdom who gave her sage advice for living well.

Addressing the theme of women in politics, Cynthia reflected on

both progress and ongoing challenges. She expressed regret that Irish politics still suffers from a low level of female representation, despite the talent and capability present among Irish women. Speaking about her own experiences, she described what it feels like to be a woman in political life, rewarding and challenging but deeply important. Cynthia paid special tributes her teachers, some of whom were present for the lecture. St Leo's has a strong tradition of public speaking and debating and Cynthia credited the school with giving her confidence and a voice which she carried into journalism, the courtroom and the political arena.



MEP Cynthia Ni Mhurchú speaks of her diverse career and recalled how her parents' key role in her life



The school's chamber choir performing under the direction of Aine Cosgrave



Cynthia Ni Mhurchú MEP with principal Wiamh Breda

This Week in The Nationalist



At the launch of the Age Friendly Carlow Strategic Plan were age ambassador Faith Amond, Superintendent Anthony Farrell, actor Patrick Bergin, Collin O'Reilly, chief executive of Carlow County Council, minister of state Jennifer Murnane O'Carroll and Martha Jane Puggan, Age Friendly programme manager

Hollywood star guests at the launch of age friendly strategic plan

By Elizabeth Lee

PATRICK Bergin, a film star whose family hails from Carlow, was guest of honour when Carlow Co Council launched its 'Age Friendly Strategic Plan' recently in Visual.

There was a definite air of celebration in the arts centre where those attending enjoyed festive refreshments, music and craic before hearing about the council's plans for helping older residents in the community.

A highlight of the morning was the presence of acclaimed actor and performer Patrick

Bergin, whose engaging talk brought laughter, nostalgia and musical energy to the room. Patrick delivered a poetry recital and reminisced about his childhood in Carlow before launching into a selection of Johnny Cash songs.

Touchingly, he also donated a guitar that will be auctioned off to raise funds for the Carlow Older People's Council, which worked in conjunction with the local authority on the plan.

Pluch Mcelroy and his wife Clara Hutchinson sang a beautiful selection of Christmas classics, while a choir from St

Leo's College added to the atmosphere when they took to the stage to sing a few numbers.

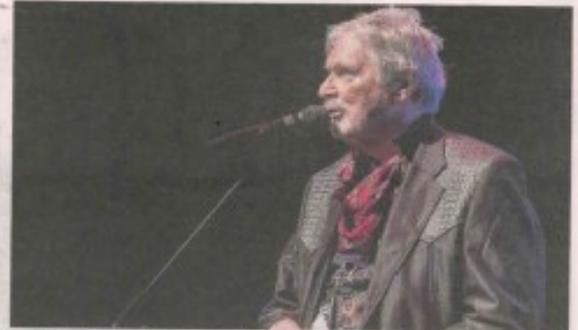
The strategic plan outlines the shared commitments of Carlow Co Council and its partners to deliver meaningful improvements in areas such as housing, transport, outdoor spaces, community participation, health supports and communication.

Collin O'Reilly, chief executive of Carlow Co Council, said: "This strategic plan represents a clear commitment to supporting our older residents. It is built on partnership, insight and a

strong belief that Carlow can continue to grow as a county where people of all ages can thrive.

"We are proud to champion this work and to implement actions that will strengthen wellbeing, inclusion and independence for older people," he added.

Joe Butler, chairperson of the Older People's Council, emphasised the importance of older people leading and shaping the agenda: "This strategy shows that older people are not on the sidelines - we are active contributors. Our lived experience guided the development of this document and it gives us great confidence to see our voices reflected so clearly."



Actor Patrick Bergin recites a poem written by his father Paddy during the launch of the age friendly strategic plan



Ursula Murphy, Mary Minnock and Mai McFeely



Members of the St Leo's College Choir performing at the launch



John Lyden, Jim Fanning, Martin Phelan, Tommy Fennell, Phil Yates and Michael Doko from Carlow Men's Shed

Domestic Abuse Support Helpline for Women

Amber
Support & Support for Women & Children

Our NEW 24/7 helpline number is
FREEPHONE 1800 819 999

When you're ready and it's safe for you to talk, we're here.
Amber is the new name for Amber Women's Refuge.

Our new FREEPHONE helpline is strongly supported by



Weekly Hot Lunch Menu

Monday 12th

- Chicken Pasta Bake
- Pasta Bake (V)

Tuesday 6th

- Chicken Kiev served with Mashed Potatoes, Vegetables & Gravy
- Mashed Potatoes, Vegetables & Gravy (V)

Wednesday 7th

- Chicken Curry & Rice
- Veg Curry & Rice (V)

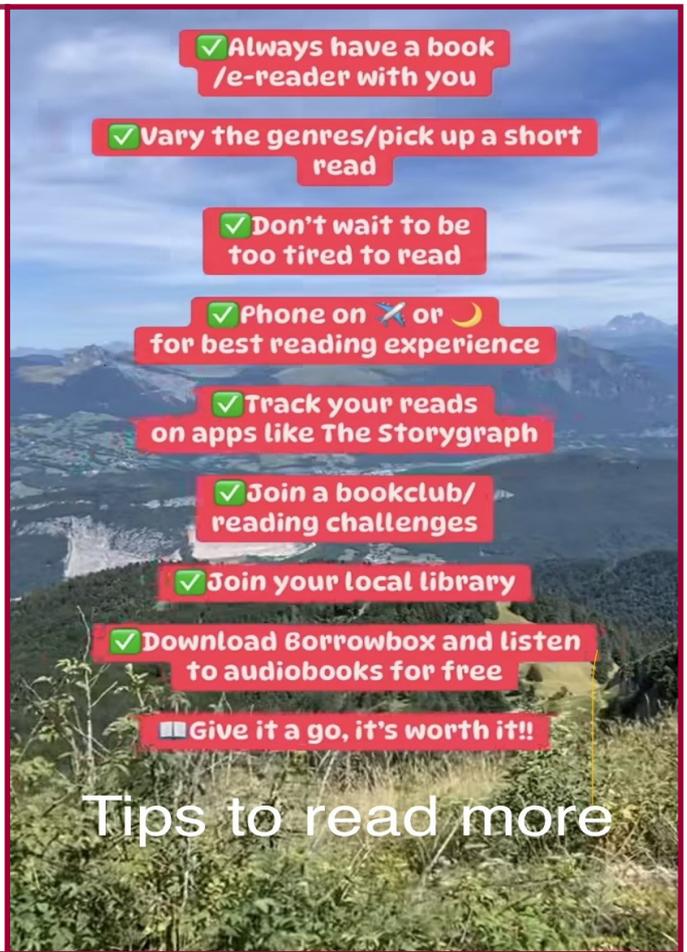
Thursday 8th

- BBQ Chicken Wrap & Chips
- BBQ Wrap & Chips

Soup

Homemade Vegetable

Small Dinner €4.00 | Large Dinner €6



✓ Always have a book /e-reader with you

✓ Vary the genres/pick up a short read

✓ Don't wait to be too tired to read

✓ Phone on ✕ or 🌙 for best reading experience

✓ Track your reads on apps like The Storygraph

✓ Join a bookclub/reading challenges

✓ Join your local library

✓ Download Borrowbox and listen to audiobooks for free

■ Give it a go, it's worth it!!

Tips to read more

Happier January 2026

MONDAY



TUESDAY



WEDNESDAY



THURSDAY

1 Find three things to look forward to this year

FRIDAY

2 Make time today to do something kind for yourself

SATURDAY

3 Do a kind act for someone else to help brighten their day

SUNDAY

4 Write a list of things you feel grateful for and why

5 Look for the good in others and notice their strengths

6 Take five minutes to sit still and just breathe

7 Learn something new and share it with others

8 Say positive things to the people you meet today

9 Get moving. Do something active (ideally outdoors)

10 Thank someone you're grateful to and tell them why

11 Switch off all your tech at least an hour before bedtime

12 Connect with someone near you - share a smile or chat

13 Take a different route today and see what you notice

14 Eat healthy food which really nourishes you today

15 Get outside and notice five things that are beautiful

16 Contribute positively to your local community

17 Be gentle with yourself when you make mistakes

18 Get back in contact with an old friend

19 Focus on what's good, even if today feels tough

20 Go to bed in good time and allow yourself to recharge

21 Try out something new to get out of your comfort zone

22 Plan something fun and invite others to join you

23 Put away digital devices and focus on being in the moment

24 Take a small step towards an important goal

25 Decide to lift people up rather than put them down

26 Choose one of your strengths and find a way to use it today

27 Challenge your negative thoughts and look for the upside

28 Ask other people about things they've enjoyed recently

29 Say hello to a neighbour and get to know them better

30 See how many people you can smile at today

31 Write down your hopes or plans for the future



ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Happier · Kinder · Together